



Orange Avenue Visioning Team Bus Tour Summary

Date/Time: April 13, 2013; 8:30 AM – 12:30 PM

Purpose: Orange Avenue Bus Tour and Stakeholder Interview

Attendees: Heather Garcia – FDOT, Richard Nasrawy – FDOT, Laura Minns – LYNX, David Ausherman – Orange County, Myra Monreal – City of Orlando, Jason Burton – City of Orlando, Holly Stenger – City of Orlando, John Rhoades – City of Orlando, Lauren Martin – City of Orlando, Pauline Eaton – City of Orlando, Jeremy Crowe – City of Orlando, Mary Hurley – Pineloch Property Management, John Cheek – Orlando Brewing/Downtown South, Holly Vanture – Downtown South, Greg Moore – DRMP, Lisa Lanman - DRMP, Russell Strimple – DRMP, Melissa Gross - DRMP

In conjunction with the Orange Avenue Corridor Planning and Project Development Study, the Florida Department of Transportation conducted a Bus Tour of the study area with the Orange Avenue Project Visioning Team. The purpose of this was to better understand the existing conditions and true nature of the corridor, to interact on issues related to past and future planning within the roadway corridor, and to collaborate on the central issues surrounding corridor needs and the future visioning and for the corridor improvement.

Tour Agenda

Met at 200 Orange Ave/SunTrust Plaza and took the LYNX 7

Tour Segment 1 – The Visioning Team rode LYNX 7 from SunTrust Plaza to the bus stop south of Gore Street. Ridership was observed to be strong coming out of Downtown and several members of the group stood for this first riding segment.

Walking Segment 1 – The group exited the bus at Old Florida National Bank south of Gore Street and walked to ORMC to observe an area south of Gore Street that is typically congested and the location of the “Orange Ave Dip.” Heather Garcia of FDOT indicated that a project to provide a profile improvement to address the “dip” is in design currently and will be let for construction in May 2013. A group discussion was held regarding the existing sidewalks, typical section of Orange Ave, and on-street parking in the segment of roadway.

Tour Segment 2 - The Visioning Team boarded the LYNX 11 bus at the ORMC stop and exited again at the stop between Kaley Avenue and Grant Street. Ridership was again observed to be strong on this link.

Walking Segment 2 – After a brief coffee break at Dunkin Donuts, the team discussed the existing parking and typical section of this segment. It was noted that as part of the Visioning Plan for Downtown South, some desire was expressed for introducing a median to better-manage access within this section in particular. Bulb-outs at select cross street locations were also discussed as a way to narrow the width of the outside travel lane and reduce speeds.

A stop was made at Muriel Street to discuss the location of two fatalities that have occurred at this location over the last five years. The group continued on to the Chipotle Restaurant where more discussion was held about different setbacks and existing streetscapes implemented by newer development in the area. Discussion was held on the placement of sidewalks and planter strips, and the associated permitting/maintenance responsibility challenges that are involved.

The tour continued down Orange Avenue with stops at the Starbucks and SODO to discuss various design elements and roadway typical sections. City staff noted that the five foot tree wells and expanded sidewalk in front of Banco Popular and T-Mobile is located off the FDOT right-of-way in an easement. Just south of this location where the sidewalk is on FDOT right-of-way, there is a grassed separation between the curb and sidewalk due to permitting challenges. As a result there is an inconsistent look throughout this part of the corridor. It was also noted that the Downtown South organization has banners with local business sponsors on many of the light fixtures along Orange Avenue.

The team crossed Michigan Avenue to observe pedestrian conditions at the intersection before continuing south to Pinloch Avenue. The setback and typical section was discussed in regards to the east side of Orange Avenue between Michigan Avenue and Pinloch Avenue where the sidewalk has the greatest setback in this area. The group crossed to the southwest corner of the Orange Avenue/Pinloch intersection to the future Wawa Gas Station site. A discussion of the effects to Pinloch Avenue and the location of the Orange Avenue access was discussed.

The group then observed the streetscaping and sidewalk layout at the new Applebee's restaurant in the Southside Shopping Plaza.

The tour was concluded at Peach Valley Café, where the team held discussions on observations of the day and filled out individual Orange Avenue Poll Questionnaires. Group discussions and the Poll Questionnaire results are summarized below.

Walking Segment Discussion Notes:

- *Laura Minns from Lynx: LYMMO ridership on Orange Avenue. 50% of ridership along whole corridor goes to study? LYMMO alternatives analysis - FTA new starts program funding requires 50% of the BRT route to be in dedicated lanes. Anticipate 10k riders a day with projections at 11k riders. From Magnolia south to Columbia. Hospital to hospital connection is paramount.*
- *Jeremy Crowe: (City of Orlando) Lake Copeland. Drainage concerns once widening or adding in LYNX/ LYMMO service. Asked him to make note of big concerns. Look for key points in questionnaire.*
- *Holly Vanture (program manager, Downtown South): tire kingdom curb drop off. Concerns about falling off curb into traffic. Fix! 3x3 planter on sidewalk. In front of Bank United there is new 8 ft sidewalk. Is there room for planter?*
- *Concerns and comments are right along with plans.*

- *John Creek, Orlando Brewing: parking is always an issue.*
- *The Dunkin Donuts Drive thru exit is observed as dangerous, no sight distance.*
- *Speculation over the cause of the two fatalities at Muriel Street, possible mid-block crossing to residential neighborhood? Jeremy Crowe pointed out the signal spacing on Orange Avenue in this segment is standard 1/4 mile.*
- *Mary: Orange Avenue Applebee's. Where we are standing used to be a drive isle in parking lot. They did planter and flipped through isle so that there was no loss of parking spots.*
- *Once Wawa is built intersection Pineloch / Orange will fail. Concerns for over capacity. Orange and McCoy as well.*
- *Jason (City of Orlando): freight consists of toll roads and highways in all of Orange County. Semi-trucks have hard time turning. Make Orange Avenue more freight friendly; make obvious to turn off Michigan. You can get freight dollars since it's in SIS.*
- *On and off corner to Michigan. Issue on how much freight is on Orange at that location.*
- *Chipotle issue: this site was one of first redevelopments of Orange Avenue. Having ample streets scape is to advantage of Chipotle but is only a site and not whole block of redevelopment so proved to be problematic.*
- *Elevation problem gets worse as you go south on Orange Avenue.*
- *If unable to acquire R/W easement is ok. As long as FDOT is first on ownership.*
- *Laura: Starbucks used to be a Wendy's. At Crystal Lake. 4 buses that come through every hour. Elevation gets eroded. Manager is very cooperative. Unable to put shelter due to minimum requirement of 8 feet.*

Orange Avenue Poll Questionnaire Results:

1. Please rank in order of importance 1 – 3, 1 being the highest priority, what you think are the most important goals for Orange Avenue: Decreased Congestion, Improved Safety, and Supporting Economic Development. Reported in number of polls listing the goals as priority #1, #2, and #3:
 - 6 – Improved Safety #1
 - 4 – Supporting Economic Development #1
 - 1 – Improved Streetscape #1
 - 3 – Improved Safety #2
 - 3 – Decreased Congestion #2
 - 3 – Supporting Economic Development #2
 - 1 – Calming Traffic
2. What do you see as the Key issue(s) on Orange?
 - Agency Developer Coordination
 - Reduce Speeds/Increase Capacity
 - Too narrow/small sidewalks, too many curb-cuts, utility conflicts

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- *Uneven sidewalks*
 - *Trying to obtain consistency in the development process that involves coordination/communication between all interested parties (i.e. FDOT, County, City, Developers, NIDs, etc.)*
 - *Minimalistic pedestrian features and inconsistent sidewalk widths*
 - *No access management due to continuous left turn lane*
 - *Slowing traffic so businesses can be seen/noticed*
 - *Making the corridor seen more user friendly for businesses and restaurants*
Offering additional transportation options like LYMMO all the way to downtown
 - *Context sensitive improvements to support a more pedestrian environment that encourages ongoing redevelopment*
 - *Lack of sidewalk space/buffers for pedestrians*
 - *Dedicated bus lanes*
 - *Improvement to intersections*
 - *Uniformity in lane width*
 - *Road to be a re-designed to be “friendlier” to pedestrians*
 - *On-street parking*
 - *Cyclists*
 - *Keeping freight from traveling north of Michigan Avenue*
3. Check any desired elements of the roadway:
- *More On-Street Parking – 5*
 - *Less On-Street Parking – 0*
 - *Landscaping – 7*
 - *Mid-block crosswalks – 3*
 - *Bus-stop enhancements – 7*
 - *Raised medians – 3*
 - *Other: wider sidewalks, “sense of place”, enhanced intersections, public transit priority at signals, improved streetscape*
4. Who do you believe the main users of Orange Avenue are?
- *Freight - 4*
 - *Commuters - 7*
 - *Local Residents - 7*
 - *Transit users - 3*
 - *Business Patrons - 5*
 - *Emergency vehicles - 3*

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- *Orlando Heath Campus patrons - 6*
 - *Pedestrian/Bicyclists - 4*
 - *Employment Centers (Southgate, SODO, Orlando Health, etc.) - 7*
 - *Other: NONE*
5. Additional Comments:
- *Enhance gateway elements*
 - *Coordinate with the stakeholders within the NID as to the desired elements for the District*
 - *Improve ADA accessibility*
 - *Don't forget about the planned BRT within the corridor*
 - *Please consider: context sensitive design, keep on-street parking, bulb-outs at intersections, street trees, outdoor seating, street furniture and outdoor seating, banners and area branding options*
 - *The selected cross section needs to strike a balance between vehicles, transit, pedestrians, local, and regional users*
 - *Maintain a consistent 4-lane with a median vehicle section with enhancements building onto that section*
 - *Examine options for re-use (such as shopping center drive lane)*

END OF SUMMARY

This summary was prepared by Melissa Gross and Greg Moore of DRMP, and are provided as a summary (not verbatim) for use by the project team. The comments do not reflect FDOT's concurrence. Please review and send comments, via e-mail: mgross@drmp.com so they can be finalized for the files.